

**Weekly Status & Information Report:
Week of April 24, 2006**

1. Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center to Open: On Monday, May 1st at 3 pm, County Executives Doug Duncan and Jack Johnson, Congressman Chris VanHollen and a number of City and other local officials will join with the Joint County Gang Prevention Task Force for the grand opening of the Crossroads Youth Opportunity Center. The center is located at 7676 New Hampshire Avenue, Suite 411. The center will be a joint county program offering youth development; mentoring, job training and placement and counseling services for young adults who are involved in gangs or have the potential for gang involvement. *(Community & Government Liaison)*

2. Traffic Calming (Ward 2): The Public Works Department set up a trial traffic calming demonstration in the intersections of Elm Avenue and Lincoln Avenue, and Elm Avenue and Auburn Avenue. The current option displays curb extensions at both intersections and will be set up for 2 weeks. The next option will be traffic circles. The circles will also be set up for two weeks. Following the demonstrations, the community will be asked which option is their preference. The current plan is to implement the preferred option when the street is resurfaced. The resurfacing is currently on hold until WSSC completes water main line replacement on Elm Avenue. *(Public Works)*

3. County Council Committee Support Funds for Gym: The County Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee voted on Monday to recommend granting a total of \$360,000 towards the cost of the proposed Takoma Park Community Center gymnasium. The proposal will need the support of a majority of the full County Council to be added to the Reconciliation List for the County's FY07 Operating Budget. Such a vote may occur on May 9th. Placement on this list means that if funds are remaining at the time the Council votes on the budget, the project may be added into the budget. According to the recommendation of the PHED Committee, if approved by the full Council, the City would receive \$240,000 in FY07 and \$120,000 in FY08 for the gym. *(Community & Government Liaison)*

4. Takoma/Langley Transit Center: City staff testified before the Montgomery County Planning Board on Thursday, April 27, to support plans for the bus transit center proposed for the Taco Bell site at the University Boulevard/New Hampshire Avenue intersection. Staff urged support for the center while advocating for wider sidewalks and other pedestrian safety improvements, per City Council Resolution 2006-15. *(Community & Government Liaison)*

5. Tenant Opportunity to Purchase (Wards 2 and 5):

- Tenants residing at 719-21 Erie Avenue notified the City that they had formed a tenants association and were submitting a letter to David Vichi, ZaZa Inc., informing him that they are interested in exploring their rights to purchase the property. The property is one of three rental facilities Montgomery Housing Partnership is attempting to purchase in Takoma Park and was included in the recently approved ordinance authorizing the execution of a PILOT agreement for the abatement of city property taxes. The tenants

association has 120 days to submit a matching contract to purchase. The sales price is \$1,400,000.

- Rozanne Look and Mario Cristaldo of the City's Tenant Capacity Building Program will meet with the tenants at 8508-10 Flower Avenue and 701-03 Ethan Allen Avenue this weekend to discuss the recent notices of sale that they received from the owners of their rental properties. Tenants at 8508-10 Flower Avenue formed a tenants association in 2004. Each property has 21 rental units.
(Housing and Community Development)

6. Takoma Park Elementary School Expansion - Feasibility Study Underway (Ward 1): HCD staff attended the first in a series of five community meetings held by Montgomery County Public Schools to facilitate the development of a feasibility study of a planned 22,500 sq. ft. addition at the Takoma Park Elementary School. The project provides for the construction of additional classrooms, special education space, instructional support and administrative space as well as the possible reconfiguration of the site. The need to address the traffic concerns of the neighborhood and to maintain appropriate green space was stressed by participants. *(Housing and Community Development)*

7. Rent Stabilization Monitoring Activity (City-wide): Each month, HCD staff monitors the Rent Stabilization Program by randomly selecting rental properties to investigate. Last month, this investigation showed there were three properties where the landlords were charging illegal rents. Corrective action has been completed by the landlords which involved reimbursements totaling \$1,804 to one tenant, and \$737 to another tenant. If you would like the Department to conduct an investigation of the rents being charged at your rental property, please contact Jean Kerr at 301.891.7216.
(Housing and Community Development)

8. Warrant Obtained (Ward 6): Criminal Investigations obtained a warrant for an adult male on charges including forgery and uttering, in relation to an identity theft that began in the 1000 block of University Blvd. *(Police)*

9. Automated Speed Enforcement: Capt. Coursey attended the Executive Steering Committee on Automated Speed Enforcement, which organized after legislation provided for cameras as a mechanism for speed enforcement in Montgomery County. The group learned this week that the courts, citing an expected increase in volume of citations, indicated concerns regarding sufficient resources to process them, which may result in delays in implementing automated systems. *(Police)*

10. Community Legacy Program Announcements (City-wide): Community Legacy awards for Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties were announced by the Governor's office on Monday, April 24th. Unfortunately neither of the City's projects received funding (\$250,000 had been requested to complete the commercial section of the Carroll Avenue streetscape project with an additional \$50,000 requested for the capitalization of a revolving loan fund to assist tenants considering

purchase of their units.) The City will continue to explore funding opportunities for both of these projects. *(Housing and Community Development)*

11. 7001 Carroll Avenue Redevelopment Project (Ward 1): ICG, the owners of 7001 Carroll Avenue, participated in the second of three planned design consultations before the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission on Wednesday, April 25th. The project, if approved, would provide for the construction of approximately 71 residential units and 2 small retail spaces in Old Town. The meeting was well attended with area residents and representatives from the Facade Advisory Board, WACO neighborhood association, and Historic Takoma voicing their concerns regarding the scale and massing of the proposed project, as well as the impact of the development on the neighborhood. *(Housing and Community Development)*

12. Landlord-Tenant Affairs (City-wide): Staff met with Buddy Daniels from the Emergency Preparedness Committee to discuss how a handbook entitled "Preparing for Disaster" can be distributed to tenants residing in Takoma Park. Plans to incorporate the distribution of the information into the activities that are conducted by the Tenant Capacity Building Program will be initiated. Staff also plans to contact already formed tenant associations to distribute the handbook which is available in English and Spanish. *(Housing and Community Development)*

13. Affordable Housing Forum (City-wide): Please mark your calendars for the 2006 Affordable Housing Forum. The forum, cosponsored by the City of Takoma Park, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and the Washington Area Housing Trust, will be held on Tuesday, May 23 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center. Topics to be considered in the discussion include building support for the preservation of affordable multi-family housing, land trusts, and affordable housing trust funds. Experts from across the region will be participating in the planned panel discussions. *(Housing and Community Development)*

14. Volunteers Needed in Old Takoma (Ward 1 and 3): The Old Takoma Business Association and the Main Street Design Committee will be hosting a "clean-up" in the Old Takoma on Saturday, May 6, 2006. Help tear down flyers, pick up trash, plant, and otherwise spruce up the area. Volunteers should meet at one of three locations - 4th and Blair, Laurel and Carroll Avenue, or Takoma Junction - at 9:00 am on May 6th. HCD staff have assisted the Design Committee in the coordination of this event. *(Housing and Community Development)*

15. Officers in Meetings (Ward 1): Det/Cpl Andrew John and Cpl Tina Smith spoke at a citizens meeting Wednesday regarding neighborhood concerns in North Takoma. Topics included police patrol, investigations, interjurisdictional cooperation, and the Safe Takoma initiative; also attending was Capt. Coursey and Lt. Cipperly. Capt. Coursey attended the PSCAC meeting Wednesday night. *(Police)*

16. **Back on Track:** Criminal Investigations has reoccupied its first floor offices. It was moved in February to accommodate construction work related to bulkheads between the old and new portions of the city building. *(Police)*

17. **Journeys of the Heart Exhibit - Opening Reception (City-wide):** The Takoma Artists' Guild (TAG) will be hosting an opening reception for its spring show - Journeys of the Heart - on Sunday, May 7th from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm in the Takoma Park Community Center. The exhibit can be viewed in the Richard Dempsey Memorial Gallery and the Atrium Gallery beginning May 1 and will run through the month of May. *(Housing and Community Development)*

18. **Exhibition Director (City-wide):** The Arts and Humanities Commission voted on Tuesday, April 25, to establish an Exhibitions Director for AHC sponsored exhibits at the Takoma Park Community Center. A small honorarium would be provided to the selected individual. For more information, please contact the Arts and Humanities Commission at ahc@takomagov.org or 301.891.7224. *(Housing and Community Development)*

19. **Poetry Reading - Open Reading May 18 (City-wide):** Don Berger, Takoma Park Poet Laureate, and the Arts and Humanities Commission will be hosting an open reading of poetry on Thursday, May 18 at 7:00 pm in the Takoma Park Community Center. If you write poetry, please join us. We would love to hear your work. The event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, please contact the Arts and Humanities Commission at ahc@takomagov.org or 301.891.7224. *(Housing and Community Development)*

20. **Officers in Training:** Five officers participated in Taser training, a one-afternoon course offered in-house. Taser is a less lethal secondary weapon that can be utilized to gain compliance with less chance for injury to suspects or officers. *(Police)*